GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3452
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2002
BLINDNESS AMONG CHILDREN
AMBATI BRAHMANAIAH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether blindness among children in the country is almost five times more than that of developed nations;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check the menace?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) & (b): No nationwide survey has been undertaken to ascertain the prevalence of childhood blindness in the country. Pilot survey undertaken in 2000-01 indicated that only 0.10% of children in Delhi and 0.18% in rural area of Andhra Pradesh were estimated to be blind. Main reasons for blindness in Children are refractive errors, corneal opacity, congenital cataract and retinal disorders.

(c): Steps taken by the Government to prevent and control childhood blindness are:

(i) School eye screening programme to detect and correct refractive errors.

(ii) Vitamin - A Prophylaxis to children below 6 years.

(iii) Mass awareness regarding eye hygiene and prevention of injuries.

(iv) Promoting eye donation and utilization of donated eyes for corneal transplantation